



# Pest Detection and Management Programs

Plant Protection and Quarantine

Weekly Notice, April 1, 2004

This “Weekly Notice” is prepared by the Pest Detection and Management Programs (PDMP) to communicate recent important events. These notices and other more detailed program information can be found at:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ep/reports/>

## **Cotton Pest Programs - Boll Weevil Eradication -**

Cotton growers in west Tennessee voted last week to consolidate their three program areas into a single, statewide eradication zone. The referendum passed by a margin of 90.4 percent, and covers the next 10 years. The high level of support demonstrates grower satisfaction in what is being accomplished. They are seeing the permanent elimination of their primary pest and the costly control activities that their families have endured for over 100 years. In addition, they are now enjoying significant increases in yield as the program moves toward completion. Lower production costs and higher yields—that’s a good combination.

In Texas, Agriculture Commissioner Susan Combs has declared 7 eradication zones in West Texas as “suppressed” areas, regarding the boll weevil. This designation means that these areas, which total more than 4 million acres of cotton, have nearly completed their eradication activities.

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**Pink Bollworm Eradication -** APHIS technical coordinators and cooperators from Mexico met recently near Juarez to put the final touches on plans for this season’s program. Top officials in Mexico indicated their desire to move quickly to eliminate both the boll weevil and the pink bollworm from their entire country. This is good news for U.S. producers, because it will provide long-term protection from reinfestation from the south.

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## **Emerging Pests: Leek Moth and Swede Midge—**

The PPQ Emerging Pests homepage contains new Pest Alerts for two pests detected in Canada in the last few

years, Swede midge, *Contarinia nastutii*, and Leek moth, *Acrolepiopsis assectella*. While some states have conducted surveys, neither of these two vegetable pests have been detected in US growing areas. Drafts of New Pest Response Guidelines for the Leek moth and Swede midge have been developed by Susan Ellis of PDMP in consultation with CPHST and other subject matter experts. These guidelines will become available more widely when finalized.

The website can be viewed at:

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ep/emerging\\_pests.html](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ep/emerging_pests.html)

The Emerging Pests homepage contains pest alerts for pests that USDA Plant Protection and Quarantine has an interest in because of recent detections or appearances in neighboring countries. The purpose of the pest alerts is to raise awareness and convey information concerning pests which may present a threat to US agriculture or natural resources. As the site develops, additional pest alerts will be posted or linked to, with additional information as it becomes available. Links to program manuals and New Pest Response Guidelines are also to be included in the future. (Joel Floyd, PDMP)

**Crop Biosecurity Website Launched -** Late last year, CPHST in Raleigh (Woody Bailey, David Kaplan and others) worked with North Carolina State University to assemble a website for a particular purpose: to help answer questions about PPQ's infrastructure, scientific support, and preparedness in the area of crop biosecurity. Dr. Dunkle requested that this site become a part of PPQ's website. PDMP's program analyst, Camille Chapman has now reformatted the information in the APHIS web template and posted it at:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/biosecurity/> accessible from the PPQ homepage menu. The Crop Biosecurity website also provides one-stop shopping for a variety of PPQ initiatives that may not have previously appeared on the PPQ website. (Joel Floyd, PDMP)

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**Ralstonia solanacearum race 3 biovar** - APHIS has now confirmed the presence of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 (Rsr3b2) in five samples collected from two greenhouses at the Goldsmith Plants, Inc. Guatemala facility. The samples, all from Americana Bright Red, were determined to be infected by Rsr3b2. The bacterium was also identified by a University of Wisconsin researcher in geranium stem tissue samples collected from latently infected geraniums in Guatemala and provided by APHIS. APHIS continues work toward developing and validating a non-destructive water sampling system to detect early infestations of Rsr3b2 in geranium production facilities with the intent of having a deployable test in place later in 2004.

All held facilities in the United States have now been released. Nationally, 41 states had a total of 471 suspect facilities, no facilities are currently being held. Through March 17, control actions (destruction, disposal and disinfection) were completed at 453 facilities and all 471 facilities were released; facilities did not require a control action for release if they did not have suspect plants. More than 2.1 million cuttings or plants have been destroyed.

**SOD** - On March 29, PPQ began restricting the interstate movement of *Phytophthora ramorum* host and associated host plants from all California nurseries. This action is being implemented through a compliance agreement with the State of California. Under the agreement, California nursery owners who want to ship listed plants must undergo a nursery stock inspection before those plants can be transported across state lines. The new measure prohibits an estimated 1,500 California nurseries from shipping plants susceptible to *P. ramorum* until those nurseries can be inspected and found free of the pathogen.

PPQ is finalizing plans for a national Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) to determine if *P. ramorum* is causing disease symptoms on hosts and associated hosts in other parts of the country.

Thirteen states have promulgated their own regulations to prevent the movement of PPQ regulated plants and, in

some cases, other California-origin plants into their states. Alabama, Utah and Montana are already restricting movement of plants from WA and OR.

Earlier this month, during a CDFA CAPS survey, state plant health and pest prevention officials confirmed the presence of *P. ramorum* on several varieties of camellia plants at a wholesale horticultural nursery in Los Angeles County and at a mail order nursery in San Diego County. Three trace forward nurseries in Florida have tested positive for the pathogen on March 31.

Nationally, 1,169 nurseries received material from the Los Angeles County wholesaler and 50 trace forwards from that facility have been identified; 955 have been visited; 612 state and/or federal holds have been placed involving 132,634 plants. The mail order nursery identified over 6,000 customers who received their bonsai camellias.

For further information about the USDA's SOD program, including program document and testing protocols visit our Web site at: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ispm/sod/>. PPQ has set up a SOD Hotline at 1-888-703-4457 for inquiries from media, nursery owners and the public.

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